

BLUE GRASS BLADE

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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT



Robert Green Ingersoll

What mighty magic lurks in that name? What noble influences are wrought that stir up the best and purest impulses of the human heart?

Ingersoll! An intellectual athlete. Ingersoll! Brought into the world for agitation, for controversy, for mental conflict and the final acquisition of human happiness! Ingersoll! He whose words were as chained lightning, an imperious knight of the controversial arena with armor shining, equipped for battle at every point. Ingersoll! And what glorious conquests he wrought; what a splendid philosophy he proclaimed.

Tuesday, August 11, is the anniversary of his birth and it should be made a memorable occasion in the heart of every man and woman who loves the liberty he advocated. Ah! Friends, it is not the mere birth of a man that moves posterity to pay tribute, but the life itself, and if we judge the late Colonel Ingersoll in this light, then, indeed, does it become a pleasing duty for the Blade, in its humble way, to celebrate the event as best it can by the manner and method here obtaining.

Robert Green Ingersoll first saw the light of day at Dresden, on the West shore of Seneca Lake, in the state of New York, on the 11th day of August, 1833, just 75 years ago next Tuesday. He was a son of Rev. John Ingersoll, a famous Presbyterian preacher in his day, eloquent and gifted as a pulpit orator, from whom his talented and gifted son inherited his wonderful oratory and master of the art of speech, but in a vastly different direction. His father was of English descent. His mother, formerly a Miss Mary Livingston, was born at Lisbon, New York, and in her veins flowed the blood of the Dutch, Scotch and Irish ancestors. Ingersoll's father and mother were married at Ogdensburg, New York, in 1822. Ingersoll was one of five children, three sons and two daughters. The mother dying while America's greatest orator was still a mere child, the duty of looking after the family, especially the young children, fell upon Mary Jane Ingersoll, an elder sister, into whose loving hands their mother had committed them upon her death bed. The extreme gentleness of that sister touched the heart of this afterwards great man and the circumstances of his early life he never forgot, or the sister who had watched so tenderly over him. Robert G. Ingersoll was the youngest of the family.

For the more important incidents connected with the early life of Ingersoll, we cull from the *The Life and Reminiscences of Ingersoll*, by Edwin Garstin Smith, now being sold by Peter Eckler, of New York City.

He began the study of law at the age of 18 years at Greenville, Pond county, Illinois. In 1853 he taught school at Metropolis, on the Ohio River. In 1854 he worked in the Marion offices of Williamson county, Illinois. Was admitted to the bar of Illinois, December 20th, 1854. Formed

a partnership, in law, with his brother, Ebon Clark Ingersoll, at Shawneetown, in 1855. While here he also worked in a land office with the father-in-law of John A. Logan. Served also as a deputy circuit clerk. Moved to Peoria in 1857. Attended the session of the Legislature that year on some railroad business. He and his brother opened law offices in Peoria as well as at Shawneetown. Some changes were made in the law firm by the admission of Messrs. Puterbaugh and McCune. Ebon Clark Ingersoll was elected a member of Congress several terms and practically dropped out of the law practice. Robert G. Ingersoll began to practice law alone in 1876. About the same time he was elected President of the Peoria and Rock Island Railway. Became a Democratic candidate for Congress in 1880 but was defeated. On February 13, 1882, he was married to Miss Eva A. Parker, a beautiful and accomplished daughter of B. W. Parker, of Groveland, Tazewell county, Illinois. Thirty-seven years of unalloyed happiness to both husband and wife followed in fact to all who had the good fortune to get within that charmed circle, known as the Ingersoll home.

Ingersoll raised a regiment of soldiers in 1862 on the Union side of the Civil War. He was commissioned as Colonel on October 22, 1861. Was mustered into the service December 20, 1861. His regiment was the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry. February 22, 1862, Ingersoll, with his regiment, was ordered to St. Louis, then the seat of war. He participated in the battles at Shiloh and Corinth. While temporarily stationed at Jackson, Tennessee; in December of the same year, he was ordered out with six hundred men for reconnoitering and skirmishing purposes. His meager command was surprised and overcome by a force of ten thousand under command of General Forrest. Ingersoll was captured. The federal government had suspended the rule of exchanging prisoners of war, but through the charm of his personal magnetism, Ingersoll succeeded in getting himself paroled, together with a number of his fellow prisoners. He accepted his parole and went back to Peoria, with his wife and niece, who were both with his regimental headquarters. No exchange having allowed him he resigned his commission on June 30, 1863, and returned once more to private life.

When he rejoined the regiment he was a Democrat. His observations concerning slavery and his experience in the army made him a Republican, which he announced in St. Louis, while a prisoner on the Federal part of 1863.

Ingersoll was appointed Attorney-General of Illinois, in 1866, by Governor Oglesby. In 1868 Ingersoll became an announced candidate for the Governorship. John M. Palmer, who also wanted to be Governor, circulated the report that Ingersoll was an infidel. Just before the republican convention was held, a preacher called at the Ingersoll home and asked him

if that report was true. Ingersoll handed him a copy of Voltaire, which the preacher read and commended, not knowing the author's name at the time but later discovered it and fled, increasing the circulation of the report of Ingersoll's infidelity. Hypocrisy and political policy now formed a partnership in order to defeat Ingersoll for the nomination. Ingersoll was requested by many well meaning friends and admirers to renounce in some public way, his infidel views. He was also asked to become a candidate for Attorney-General, instead. His reply is given as follows:

"When I say I am a candidate for a particular office, I mean it; and when I say I am not a candidate for a particular office, I mean that, too. When I became a candidate for Governor I renounced my candidacy for Attorney-General, and other candidates were invited into the field. I would despise myself forever were I now to become a candidate against any of these men."

His biographer states that while Ingersoll was ambitious and desired the Governorship, yet he refused to recant his views and forfeit his self-respect. Ingersoll could not be both Governor and hypocrite. Others could and did.

Ingersoll turned to his law practice and his books. He read and studied the master minds of the world. Christianity had won a signal triumph in defeating him for the nomination but it was the undoing of the church power in America. By his public lectures and his published writings, Ingersoll has done more to undermine the church influence in America and expose the weakness of that form of religious faith, than any other known man in the history of the republic. Of this portion of his life's great work we need not speak here. Others have done that and it is known so widely and well that such is hardly necessary. We have aimed to give some of the most important facts in connection with his life not generally known.

After lecturing throughout the country, emancipating the intellect of the American people, preaching the gospel of human liberty, a liberty for "Man, Woman and Child," he selected Dobb's Ferry, New York as his home and opened large and important law offices in the city of New York. He had also a New York residence. This was on Fifth Avenue. Two daughters were born to him, Misses Maud R. and Eva Ingersoll. He had no son, although the church industriously circulated a story to the effect that Ingersoll had told his son to take his mother's religion, instead of his father's to live and die by. He died at Dobb's Ferry, July 21, 1899. We can say of Ingersoll as Ingersoll said of Henry Ward Beecher:

"The memory of this ample man is now a part of Nature's wealth."

The church had preached man into hell but Ingersoll put hell out of man. His bright genius shone in almost isolated grandeur. In him the Republic of America may see its brightest intellectual star upon the dawn of a boundless day. Priests dreaded this intellectual Titan nor dared they venture upon the mountain heights of thought to which he had successfully climbed. His every word was a mental picture, delicious and rare, light and sweet as some goosamer film upon a summer sea. In his desire to improve earth he gave up hope of heaven, and in his earnestness for man he abandoned a belief in god.

His Works the Rarest Flowers in the Garden of Literature

Ingersoll Was a Niagara, a Resistless Torrent of Inexhaustible Force in the Great World of Thought.

(By Josephine K. Henry.)

This issue of the Blade is to commemorate the birth of the one, peerless immortal Ingersoll whom the world of thought reverences, and before whom the world of faith is silenced. The one man who sun-crowned with regal reason passed through the world and left a trail of light that will last until human thought dies, and the light of the stars is extinguished. He left a light upon the altar of the human mind, to guide the nations to the radiant future, when Reason shall reign, and faith and her handmaids ignorance and fear are as dead as the Gods of Olympus.

Ingersoll was the one man of our time that by intellectual force turned a page in the history of the world. Bruno, Volney, Voltaire and Paine laid the foundation of the Temple of Reason, and Ingersoll erected the superstructure and threw wide its portals to the human mind. There was about this man the primal energy and directness of Nature. He was in the world of thought a Niagara, a resistless torrent of inexhaustible force.

The mind moved in large curves, and swept along in royal unconsciousness of

academic restraints, and edicts of the schools, that made the human mind a cowering convict before their imaginary gods, ghosts and devils.

He sailed from headland to headland, and navigated every creek and inlet, where religious superstition lurked to entrap credulous and fear-laden humanity. He was the most powerful orator of the modern world and Demosthenes, Cicero and Caesar with their dead languages and religions were pigmies before this intellectual giant, with his living truth and language as his only weapons.

So mentally panoplied was this man that orthodoxy no more dared to meet him in open, honorable, intellectual battle, than attempt to observe the nicest proprieties of life in the presence of a hurricane.

He poured forth floods of eloquence from the throne of Reason, coined from his mighty brain and great heart. His thoughts, like mountain torrents went crashing and thundering down the crags of superstition, then calming and enchain- ing the brain and heart of humanity with symphonies of sympathy and love as soft as the notes of the Aeolian.

The orthodox world poured its hatred and torrents of abuse on the great Ingersoll for these three offendings:

- 1st. He denied that the bible was divinely inspired and inerrant.
- 2nd. He absolutely rejected the doctrine of eternal punishment.
- 3rd. He honestly said he did not know

whether or not there was another life after this one.

Are our Christian friends dead sure that they know?

Surely this man who brought a hundred thousand pulpiteers to the defense of their creeds said something of which the schools had never dreamed.

If all Christians whose sins have been washed away in "the Blood of the Lamb" lived as pure, honest, and noble lives as the great and good Ingersoll, "miserable sinners" would disappear from Christendom, and there would be no need of a scheme of salvation, or of a "fountain filled with blood" to wash away the sins of the world.

Ingersoll's teachings lurk today in every pulpit in Christendom. His ideas are clothed in the garments of orthodoxy, but his gospel of Reason is eating out the heart of faith.

The works of Ingersoll are the rarest flowers in the garden of literature and lovers of Truth, Liberty and Justice should see to it, that they are placed in all public libraries, and used as text-books in our public schools to place before the rising generations the grandest literature of the ages, and a code of justice and morals never before presented to the human mind.

Let the intellectual world make of August 11th, the birthday of the immortal Ingersoll, a red letter day and hold it in reverence and gratitude.

Versailles, Kentucky.

Ingersoll, the Poet

Majestic, Commanding, Towering, He Stood Among Men Like a Mighty Oak Above Its Fellows.

(By Dr. J. B. Wilson.)

Encomium has been almost exhausted in praise of this wonderful man, whose brain was a store-house of pyrotechnics, forever going off in the gallery of imagery, and bursting into myriads of brilliantly variegated stars. We wonder at that imagination, which seemed to embrace the whole of boundless nature—of nature secret, hidden, fine and delicate, as well as that stupendous to the view.

Now we wander with him through Arcadian fields, green-velveted, inlaid with daisied mosaics, hedge-bordered, and fragrant, with eglantine, jasmine and wild-rose; through a mighty wood, now musical with the pipe of its sylvan spirits, and now holding the howling tempest in its many-fingered clutch; now by a trickling spring we stand, embowered by a paradise of green leaves. Through woodland solitudes we trace its rippling course, there with it wind through blossoming, shadowy vales. With him, we ascend the mountain, and stand by torrents, which filter down through creviced darkness, from far heights, snow-crowned and star-gemmed. By mighty cataracts, mist-shrouded and rain-bowed with prisoned sunbeams—whose hoarse, sepulchral anthems awe the soul to silence, as they sink and die away in the

foam-fretted depths. Now, we float with him on the crystal tides of a mighty river, bearing upon its polished bosom the rich embargoes of every scented shore and golden strand.

And so, I might go on depicting nature's many moods as reflected in the myriad mind of this masterful man. Above all else, Ingersoll was the poet. Our first thought of him always is that of light and shade, tint and shape, joy and sorrow, love and laughter, beauty and song, sublimity and power.

His thought, no matter how serious, how calculating and profound, was forever bursting into blossom. Like Milton, who saw not, and Beethoven, who heard not, the sense and spell of beauty was upon him, and he had to speak. If a mountain arose, somber and stupendous before him, he would seize the clouds, unravelled by the blast, and wind their fleecy scarfs around its ragged sides. Even the rough in nature, the uncouth in man, he beautified and adorned.

Poetry is the sister spirit of music, mirth and sorrow. It is the apotheosis of sentiment, the blossom and fragrance of all human knowledge, human passions, emotions and language. It is enthusiasm with wings of fire. It is the angel of high thoughts, occupying that uppermost chamber of the soul, that opens toward the sun's rising. The words of Ingersoll became luminous, just as 'the poet fingers of this

poet-painter passed over them their phosphorescent glow. 'Twas the music and rhythm, the light and shade, the tint and tone of his speech, which gave it force and charm. Take these away and he would sink to the prosaic and commonplace; but with these, his mind was like unto a spheroid firmament filled with countless fires.

He was one of the greatest among men—first, because he was one of the greatest of poets; second, because he was, pre-eminently, a humanitarian, a great general and leader, invincible in the sacred cause for which he stood—that of the reign of reason, justice and truth.

So majestic, so commanding and towering he stood among men that I can liken him only to a mighty oak, lifting his green head high above his fellows—first to sentinel the awakening sun and last to receive his dying smiles; first to withstand the force of the blast, and first the thunder and lightning to defy.

Still, green-robed and towering, he stands in our memories, a mighty teacher among men, looking down upon the sophistries, superstitions, cruelties and errors of a decaying faith, even as the towering oak of the forest looks down upon the dead snags and twisted, knotted, stunted shrubs, long arrested in their growth.

What a magnificent personality! What a wonderful combination of heart and brain! We picture him now—a delight to the eye—imposing, superior, grand!

Again we hear his voice, now like the flow of soft currents, which wrap and dissolve us in ecstasy; now like a might cata-

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ract, thundering its ceaseless anthems; now like the whispering of night winds among forest boughs; now like the tumult and crash of battle; now, tuned to fireside notes, to love's soft accents, to childhood's happy laugh; now, bursting into wrathful scorn; now, sinking to a mournful melody, with the thought of some human sorrow; now leaping like a lightning flash from the heart of a thunderstorm; now subdued and tender, as though laden with the sound of years of departed happiness.

We listen, we strain to catch each word—we grow intense—we thrill with sympathy at some touch of suffering—we hate wrong

—defy error, loathe superstition and scorn injustice; we glow with condemnation of persecution—we triumph in the victory of reason's martyrs—we soften to tears—we laugh—we burst into thunderous applause.

Great he was as an orator, but he far excelled in speech; great as an actor, but far greater as painter and poet, and as such he will be longest remembered. In the course of time, the battle of freedom which he fought will have passed into ancient history; but the music that flowed from his lips of gold will live as long as affection warms the human heart; and the classic grandeur of his speech will forever stand

in tempted thought, like Phidian forms of faultless symmetry.

He gave the world a wealth of sentiment that will live as long as charmed lovers wander wooing over the vine-clad hills; as long as summer breezes are dimpled with the chasing waves of childhood's merry laugh; as long as there are fire-side affections and leave-takings and home-comings; as long as music and art, and beauty and trust, and progress and patriotism are inspirations of the human mind; as long as pity paints a rain-bow fringe o'er the forsaken, crushed and despairing hearts of men.



Paine, Jefferson, Franklin, Ingersoll

Grand Quarternion of Illustrious and Immortal Heroes With Name and Fame as Imperishable as the Stars.

(By Dr. T. J. Bowles.)

In previous articles not a single line has been devoted to the subject of religion; I have strictly confined myself to the subject of superstition, a hideous monster, which I have a valid right to believe, all intelligent lovers of humanity will gladly assist in banishing from this beautiful world.

If any of the readers of this article should have a trembling fear that if superstition is destroyed, religion will die, let me comfort and assure these timid mortals that the life of superstition, and the life of true religion are not bound together; one is the malignant child of ignorance, hate and vengeance, and the other is the beautiful child of intelligence, love and goodness; superstition was born in the dens and caves of savagery, in the dark and dismal past; pure religion is born in the enlightened brain, and in the tender heart that beats and throbs with love and sympathy for all the sons and daughters of men.

I would be glad to devote an article to the sublime and sacred subject of pure religion, but for the present I must confine myself to the slimy and hateful subject of superstition, and will only say in passing, that true religion suffered no harm at the hands of Paine, Jefferson and Franklin, who successfully labored to overthrow the wicked superstition that prevailed in

their day, that kings are appointed by the almighty ruler of the universe to rule, and enslave and oppress mankind.

For thousands of years this devilish superstition had kept the whole human family in abject bondage, and the river of life through all the dark and cheerless centuries, overflowed with blood and tears and sorrow; these grand men broke the power of this malignant superstition, and gave us the priceless blessing of freedom, and now in the bright morning of the twentieth century it surpasses all human comprehension, that thousands of men still continue to defend this vile superstition of the middle ages.

Pure religion suffered no harm from the glorious life and work of the illustrious and immortal Ingersoll, who banished the devil from the United States, and completely extinguished the fires of an eternal hell.

Paine, Jefferson, Franklin and Ingersoll—a grand Quarternion—four illustrious and immortal heroes whose names and fame are as imperishable as the stars—their memory will be embalmed in the grateful hearts and affections of all the generations that are yet to be, through all the centuries that are yet to come; they removed from the brain of their fellow-men some of the ghosts and devils of superstition, and conferred upon humanity the priceless blessing of mental and political freedom; their value to the human race immeasurably surpasses all the priests of all the ages from Melchizedek down to the present holy and infallible Pope of Rome.

It now develops upon the enlightened

men and the educated women of the civilized world to finish the grand and glorious work of Paine, Jefferson and Ingersoll, and when he shall have succeeded in completing the task to which they dedicated and devoted their lives, the pure religion of love, the fairest flower in all the world, will bloom in every heart, and its sweet fragrance will fill the home of the toiling millions.

We cannot hope to lift the awful burthen that now weighs so heavily upon the weary shoulders of the human race, until we exterminate the vile brood of superstitions that still persist throughout the world; we cannot hope to empty the prisons and the asylums of our distracted country until crucified saviors, divine revelation and vicarious atonement take their legitimate places in the mythology of savagery and barbarism, for every ward politician, every grafter, every vote-buyer, every hoodler, every labor-exploiter, every ballot-box stuffer, every franchise robber, every timber thief, every jury briber, every bank wrecker, every seducer and betrayer of women—nearly all these swindlers and villains are the foul whelps and the filthy spawn of superstition; they have been with god, and knelt at the shrine of supernatural religion, and had their sins washed away in the blood of a crucified god.

How long! O how long will it yet be before mankind will learn that true religion has no kinship whatever with superstition?

Muncie, Ind.

"AMAZING GRACE"

"AMAZING TRUTH."

(By R. D. Fausett.)

Amazing truth how sweet the sound
That saved a dupe like me,
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.

Chorus:—

Oh how I love reason,
Oh how I love reason,
Oh how I love reason,
Because it set me free.

'Twas myth that taught my heart to fear
And truth my fears relieved,
How bright did reason's light appear
The hour I disbelieved.

Beyond Gods, Devils, Hells and snares
I have already come,
My search-light shields me from all fears,
And truth will shield me on.

Justice has promised good to me,
Reason my hope secures,

Truth shall my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

And when this flesh and heart shall fail
And conscious life shall cease
Babes, yet un-born will tell the tale
Of liberty and peace.

Ah hells will soon dissolve like snow,
God's light refuse to shine,
Then reason's light will reign below
To Liberate mankind.

Ten New Commandments

Intended To Be Used and Followed By All
Men as a Substitute for Those Given
By Moses.

(By Harriet M. Closs.)

1. Thou shalt have no other god than the one which money and church influences places upon the throne.
2. Thou shalt not bow down to any image except it be to one wearing ecclesiastical petticoat and marked with the \$ seal, for I, the modern god, am a jealous god, conferring office and influence only upon those who serve me faithfully and pay my assessments, even unto the third and fourth generations.
3. Thou shalt not utter the name of this mighty god with irreverence or complaining else the terrible fate of the starving workers here and the condemned sinners hereafter, shall be thy portion.
4. Remember the Sabbath day to the end that all the poor and sick and distressed be prevented the enjoyment or leisure; that they may be herded into the churches where they may be taught humility and subjection and hear of the philanthropic exploits of the despoilers of virtue and substance.
5. Be obsequious to thy earthly master and spiritual ruler, for it is not decreed that the common masses shall aspire. "To him that hath shall be given but him

that hath not shall be taken away even that he hath."

6. Thou shalt not kill without the sanction of ruler or priest, but with it thou mayest make wholesale slaughter, either at thine own fireside or in foreign fields.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery unless belonging to the chosen, thou mayest conceal it from the critical eye of the common herd and thereby shift the responsibility of reproduction upon unsuspecting victims.

8. Thou shalt not steal a paltry sum but thou mayest loot the heathen, wreck savings banks and form mergers to be called to high positions in the sanctuary and state councils. Thou shalt not bear false witness, "unless the glory of god aboundeth more through thy lie," and unfinancial benefits accrue to the powers that be.

9. Thou shalt not covet that which is thy neighbors, but thou mayest take over unto thyself his hard earned belongings or his "one ewe lamb" so that covetousness may not dwell in thy heart.

10. Thou shalt pray loud and fervently for any inadvertent kindness toward thy fellows and the lord will listen to and forgive such kind deeds so long as thou contribute liberally to the support of the priestly satellites who bolster superstitious beliefs.

Lincoln and Ingersoll

Both Leaders in Liberty's Great Army—
One Freed the Limbs and the Other
Broke the Shackles That Fettered
the Human Intellect.

(By Ex-Senator Perry Engle, of Iowa.)

In 1831 Abraham Lincoln went down the Mississippi river in a flat boat, working for \$10 a month. At New Orleans he visited a slave market. A bright young colored girl was on the block. Lincoln heard the brutal words of the auctioneer—the savage jibes of the bidders. His sense of right and love of justice was insulted. To his companions he said:

"Boys, if ever I get a chance to hit slavery, I'll hit it hard."

That poor, sinless, helpless colored girl sowed the seeds of freedom deep into a great heart.

Thirty-one years afterwards Lincoln's chance came. He kept his word. By his proclamation four million slaves were restored to liberty.

On the tablets of memory for all ages to come the names of Lincoln and Ingersoll should be honored and revered as two noble liberators of the race. One the liberator of human bodies the other of human intellects. In every step of civilization the world has had its leaders. What is Rome without Caesar? Protestantism without Luther? Science without Darwin? Electricity without Edison? Liberty without Washington, Lincoln and Ingersoll?

Living in a time that tried men's souls, when our nation was seething in the turmoil of a bloody civil war, Robert G. Ingersoll raised a regiment and with Lincoln helped to hit slavery hard. Chattel

slavery was destroyed, but intellectual slavery still remained. To millions, liberty meant much more than had been won by blood and war. Liberty of speech, of press, of brain and of intellect was yet to be fought for and won. The grand army that was to fight this war for mental freedom was marshaled and directed by a leader, Col. Robert G. Ingersoll.

Ingersoll was a master of literature and history; versed in the science of Darwin, Virchow, Hackel and Huxley. Possessed of a great mind, an indomitable will, unwavering honesty; with a matchless physique, he was the general of generals in the army of intellect.

It is said that at one time he was offered the governorship of Illinois if he would renounce his religious belief. His answer was: "No, gentlemen; my convictions are my own, they do not belong to Illinois."

His "Plumed Knight" speech of 1876, nominating James G. Blaine for the Presidency, was read and admired around the world.

Everywhere immense throngs greeted this gifted general, fighting their battles for mental freedom. Today our ministers have quit preaching about an endless hell or torment. They are calling on men to reveal their religion in their deeds. Their brotherhood of man is a barometer of their love of god. Ministers today are denouncing superstitions and dogmas.

Ingersoll has prepared the way for posterity. For fear he has given us courage. For dogma, reason. He has liberalized every church, freed every pulpit, and liberated every pew. No American history is complete with the name of Ingersoll left

out. This earth is the better and life is sweeter and liberty safer because Col. Robert G. Ingersoll lived.

On the urn that encloses his ashes should be carved these words:

"LIBERATOR OF MEN."

The warp and woof of death to him was a mystery. In his agnosticism he said: "I do not know. I hope for a better life." In life's battles this great man was oak and steel. In repose he was vine and flower. He climbed the Alpine heights and left dogmas and superstition far, far below. He labored and hoped for the golden dawn of a better and grander day. He loved justice and adored mercy. Love was his priest, humanity his religion. At his brother's grave, in the presence of Hawley, Blaine, Voorhees, Paddock, Logan, David Davis, Senator Allison and many others of the brightest men of this nation, he said:

"Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing. My brother mistook the approach of death for the return of health, whispered with his last breath, 'I am better now.' Let us believe in spite of doubts and dogmas and tears and fears that these dear words are true of all the countless dead."

"The world is my country, to do good my religion," wrote Thomas Paine. He with Jefferson, Washington, Lincoln and Ingersoll hoped and labored to have the Brotherhood of Man realized in the Republic of the World.

"Each for all,

All for each;

From each his noblest deed,

To each as he may need."

Ingersoll said while speaking of Napoleon: "I would rather have been a French peasant and worn wooden shoes; I would rather have lived in a hut with a vine growing over the door and grapes growing purple in the rays of the sun; I would rather have been that poor peasant with my loving wife by my side, knitting as the day died out of the sky, with my children on my knee and their arms about me; I would rather have been that man and gone down to the tongueless silence of the dreamless dust, than to have been that imperial impersonation of force and murder known as Napoleon the Great."

This is a beautiful picture of home. Home, that garden in which are grown the flowers of love and the vines of affection. Home, that shrine at which pure souls worship and are blest.

Once the veterans of blue and gray were entrenched on Virginia's hillsides with only the Rapidan river between them, neither army knowing at what moment the cruel, bloody battle might open. The Union band began playing "Yankee Doodle." The red, white and blue waved all over the Union camps as cheer after cheer rent the air. That was patriotism. Then, in louder, bolder strains the band across the Rapidan started up that inspiring "Dixie Land." That, too, was patriotism. It was a battle of music. Pandemonium prevailed. One of the bands started up "Home, Sweet Home;" another caught up its sweet melodies; soon all were playing and cheering that inspired song. The

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Reply to the Quiet Hosts

Recent Article by Kidder on Socialism
Brings an Answer From a Woman
Writer.

(By Julia C. Coons.)

The "Reply to the Unquiet Hosts," in July 19th, Blade, takes several conflicting positions. As it seems to aim chiefly for amusement, and to find what might be done in the line of a caustic and bombastic style, there appears to be no need of an answer. But it is a pity the author was so little interested in Socialism that he sought information only of straw Socialists. And it was unworthy, even of a straw man, to make him believe Haywood is the Socialist candidate for president.

Socialism was not intended to favor idlers, and while there is excuse for these employing caustic, vindictive or ridiculing language concerning it, there is none for workers to employ such in a discussion of best methods among themselves. If part of a school of boys have been dragging, not only their own sleds, but those of the others, back up the hill, but finally resolve to desist, the boys accustomed to being waited on may have occasion for abuse, but not the one or two who prefer to continue being lackey. These may continue at their pleasure, but have no occasion to abuse those who quit.

In trying to reach correct conclusions, we must consult averages, and not pick up isolated cases. There may be many unmarried men who receive five dollars a day, waste it on whisky, and then blame existing conditions, but I doubt it. Five dollars worth of whisky a day, or half that, would soon incapacitate any man from earning fifty cents a day. But the average wage paid working men in this country is \$447 per year, while the average products or work produced by the same working men is \$2,500. The difference over \$2,000 is paid for rent on tools and machinery.

Personally, I see no objection to taking or paying rent for either houses or machinery, provided both parties can have a hand in the bargain. Under the present regime the capitalist sets the price both on the machinery he has to rent, and the labor he has to hire, and the laborer can accept or sit down and starve. Lower rent on machinery, and higher wages will result in more homes for the laborer, and consequently lower rent for those so fortunate (or unfortunate) as to own more houses, farms, horses or tools than they can themselves use. Consequently those who have a superfluity of these articles may have to take a hand at healthful work themselves to eke out expenses.

It seems quite possible that Socialism, with capitalistic officers, might prove almost as great a failure for the majority as the present capitalistic system. This is where the great change is to be—in the kind of officers. When we elect idlers to office, we have no right to even expect honest government. Of the idle class, from which our officials have been chosen, not one per cent is honest, for if honesty means anything at all, it means honestly paying one's way through the world. Of the working class, from which Socialist officials will be chosen, at least 90 per cent are

men who are honest and reliable in every sense of the word.

Violent measures, or any general confiscation of property are not advocated by the better class of Socialists. Such may be the doctrine of a few half-informed agitators. A Socialist president could be elected and serve his term with no more upsetting of general precedents than would follow Bryan's election. A gradual raise in the wages of laborers because of lower rent on machinery: a gradual shortening of hours, because of laborers added from the idle ranks: no more mortgage, free homes, consequently less demand for rented houses, and a falling in rent: the removal of children from factories to schools, therefore more work for adult idlers, and a demand for more teachers: and an inevitable increase in education, intelligence and morality, due to the better facilities, are the main changes that a Socialist regime would inaugurate. In addition the party is pledged for the collective ownership of all means of transportation and communication; the extension of the public domain to include mines, quarries, oil-wells, forests and water power: the absolute freedom of press, speech and assemblage, as guaranteed by the Constitution: and the treating of religion as a private matter—a question of individual conscience. Also for a graduated income tax, equal suffrage, the abolition of the senate and of the president's veto power.

Socialism is co-operation. It is a family sitting down to a quiet and well-ordered table. This is the direct opposite of our present system, which can hardly be compared to any human family in existence, but may be compared to the method of eating among a class of common domestic animals.

Human nature does not change with a whirlwind, nor with a sudden changing from an old political party to a new one. But Father Time will attend to human nature. Look back fifty years, and see chattel slavery defended in nearly every pulpit in the land. Human ideals change, and with them, political parties change.

Every man under Socialism, will be allowed as much land as he and his family can cultivate, at least as long as there is land enough to go round. And on this land he will build as good a house and other improvements as he desires, or his cash allows. No party and no laws can entirely do away with competition, but they can do away with the necessity of choosing between competition and starvation.

To claim that all will be alike in worldly goods, or that all will have to work, is nonsense. But, contrary from present conditions, the man who works longest or hardest, or to the best advantage, or at the most disagreeable or dangerous jobs, will have the most for his labor. But men will not be likely to work themselves into a premature grave, under the horrible specter of a pauperized old age, an occurrence very common at present.

Certain unfortunate classes, such as doctors, preachers, lawyers, teachers and government officials will have to continue to work for wages or fees, after the main industries have been put on a co-operative

basis. But some of these classes, time will eliminate any need of. The teacher seems destined, of these, to continue absolutely necessary, for our children will always be in need of education.

In this connection may also be mentioned the fact that much work that is now done, would under Socialism be left undone. The underlings of the present who cater to the idle rich, from the valet and poodle washer, to the writer or preacher who racks his brain for excuses for competition, will gradually turn their efforts into useful channels. There is very much of the energy of the present, whose real value to mankind can only be represented by the minus sign.

Socialism will not do away with all the ills of life, certainly. The havoc wrought by fire, cyclone, earthquake, and much else, must be endured as in present. Nor need we have any fears that it might bring the race to perfection, at least in this question. Socialism will not work at variance to Nature, and as all men are not born equal, Socialism could not make them equal if it would. But it can extend to each and all equal rights and an equal chance,—a chance for each and all to cultivate the highest character, the highest type of citizenship that they are capable of.

(Continued from Page Five.)

LINCOLN AND INGERSOLL.

blue and the gray became a harmony of color. The cheer of the Yankee and Johnny turned into a charming cadence. Both armies cheered and cheered those heavenly strains, "home, sweet home." This was higher, better, and more than patriotism, it was fraternal brotherhood.

Where I a Raphael of language I would paint two pictures. I would paint the sighs of despairing men, the wails of weeping mothers, the moans of starving children; I would paint the background black as an Egyptian night. I would call this picture bigotry. In the other I would paint the light of hope in weeping eyes, the dimple upon the faded cheek; I would paint all that lives, guides and succors; all that loves and saves. Over it all I would paint the bow of promise like a perpetual benediction. This picture I would call Freedom.

AUNT ALLIE'S PROVERBS.

Reason knows no fear.

Fear knows no reason.

Redemption for humanity is enlightenment.

Intellect clasps hands with science.

Walk paths of peace in freedom.

The first step toward intellect and true.

Reformation is freedom of mind.

Let not errors of belief handicap progress.

Be earnest for action, pursuant of intellectual growth.

Woman's highest right is self-ownership.

Love alone makes perfect purity.

Current Comment on Public Events

The most casual observer cannot fail to notice, and to be deeply impressed with the manifest tendency of the highest judicial tribunal in the land, to stretch the constitution and statute law in such a way as to favor this or that religious denomination, whereas, a strict construction and application of that "sheet-anchor of liberty" would impel a maintenance of the spirit of extreme liberality that marked the framers of that famous document. This tendency is now so marked, and being done for purely political purposes, it has become a distinct danger and the patriotic American citizen would do well to mark these signs.

Through Chief Justice Fuller, a decision has just been rendered by the Supreme Court of the United States, coming from Porto Rico, on appeal, in which it is held that the Roman Catholic church has a right to acquire and hold property, as an individual, or a legal person, without the necessity of incorporation under the local law. In this country such a right accruing to the church has never been questioned. Freethinkers question the right of the government to exempt church property from equitable taxation, but the church ownership of property, as an organized body, has not been up for discussion. And yet, in no other instance, under our laws, both state and federal, can any body of men or women, form themselves into an organization and acquire through purchase, contract and be contracted with, sue and be sued, as such a body, unless duly incorporated under the local law. It appears, however, that the Porto Rican authorities at Ponce, took a different view of the subject, and sought to compel, by law, the Romish church at that place to incorporate itself under the law. The church carried the case to the United States courts and up to the court of last resort, with the result as above stated.

But this is not the principal objection to Justice Fuller's opinion. He went out of his way to touch on matters not in actual issue, throwing this religious Cerberus another sop, by saying:

"The Holy See still occupies a recognized place in international law of which the courts must take judicial cognizance. The proposition that the church had no corporate or jurat personality seems to be completely answered by an examination of the law and history of the Roman Empire of Spain, and of Porto Rico."

Can Justice Fuller point to the precise "recognized position" of the Roman Catholic church in international law? What recognized position does it have in England, in France, in America, aye, and even in Italy? What part is the "Holy See" authorized to play in any international law? What question of international law could the pope of Rome decide and what nation would submit any such question to him for decision? What objection could the pope make, or have a right to make, with any force, to any proceeding in international law by any nation on earth? Then why must our courts take "judicial cognizance" of this "recognized position?" Can it be

possible that Justice Fuller would consider the pope as a determining factor in any judicial question coming before him? Did Justice Fuller admit and recognize the pope's alleged position in making the decision here referred to? If this be true, then there are rocks and shoals ahead upon which our constitution may be wrecked, shattered, broken and rendered absolutely useless to a free people. It is true that prior to the loss of temporal power by the papacy even the United States maintained a diplomatic relationship with the Vatican. Papal delegates have since been officially received by those in authority in the United States, as such, and from all the circumstances in the case it looks like a strong bid for Catholic votes in elections.

Bearing in mind this decision, as it concerns the church in Porto Rico we are constrained to comment upon the effect it will have upon the property of the church in the Philippines. In any event it will be interesting and serious enough to demand a close watch by those who desire to see American freedom perpetuated.

* * *

The prolongation of human life beyond its present tendency to terminate at an unusual early age, is growing beyond a mere fad, and is, at last, attracting the attention of eminent French physicians who claim that old age is merely a form of disease which can ultimately be treated, by a specific, as we now treat diseases that are in the nature of infections and likely to become epidemic.

But what is the motive, and what does it prove? If the Christian religion be true, this world is but a vale of tears, a mere burdensome passage to a happier state or condition, which every true believer should be desirous of getting through with as speedily as possible. Heaven being the eternal ultimate and earth but a transitory condition, why prolong the transition and delay the ultimate? Few can entertain a doubt but what our swift sort of life and living may have a tendency to increase the death rate. Where, formerly, it was held that the allotted span of man was "three score years and ten" now the life expectancy tables of the insurance companies put the average end of mankind at sixty-six years. This difference of four years may be one of the results of our Christian civilization, but there is no just ground upon which the Christian can strive to extend it. To do so would be an implication that after all he has no desire to reach, or is in no great hurry to reach, the New Jerusalem, and would prefer staying on this ball of mud just a few years longer.

Could the Christian world be brought to that stage wherein it would strive to "improve" the few years we are now enjoying, instead of working at the late end of life to induce a prolongation, the prolongation would follow the improvement for there is nothing so conducive to longevity as happiness and contentment. First give us improvement. Improvement comes with in-

dividual freedom. Extend freedom then and longevity will set in without medical aid. Nothing kills like worry. Too many people worry themselves into an early grave. Existing conditions are conducive to and produce worry. It is a worry to live at all. A worry to maintain life. This calls for improvement that worry may disappear and with the contentment that must follow, conditions will so improve that no man of science need experiment with life in an effort to prolong it. Like a tired, yet contented child, men may lie down to the everlasting sleep without a fear or a groan; without a pang of regret or despair. To accomplish this we must first destroy the deadly Upas tree of Christianity.

The Brooklyn police made a recent raid, unexpectedly, of course, upon the congregation of the church of the First Assembly of Christ, and arrested a number of women whom it is claimed, following the mandates of their particular cult, were found, at the time of the raid, in too décolletée a costume to be considered even decent. Strange to relate the offenders were women, as the newspaper reports make no mention of any male person being in the church at the time and services were in progress. The women, in interviews given after the raid, insist that the policemen were altogether too smart, deny that they had their skirts off, or anything else, and with a degree of positive assertion insisted that the Lord was on their side and that they would win out and show the world how cruel it was.

The Blade is not informed just how these foolish women conduct their form of worship, but it must be in some sort of strange fashion, shorn almost of wearing apparel, for the raid was made, it is said upon neighborhood complaints, and the reluctant females were hauled before a magistrate when they gave bond for their appearance. Still we wonder why the orthodox religion has such a hold upon the human mind. Has it not been too frequently urged that women constitute the backbone of the church organizations and that without the women the church would soon perish? And is it not a fact? The more foolish the religious fad the greater number of women it attracts, even to the exclusion of morals and propriety. Start a new cult and it is a ten to one shot that the first converts will be women. But for the foolish women who followed in the wake of Brigham Young, and Joe Smith, mormonism would have died out in a year, but the women kept it going and according to Mormon teaching and practice the cult must have boasted considerably more women than men or the life of Brigham Young was a failure. Going back to religious tradition, or history call it which you may, even Jesus made an impression upon women and he was able to boast a Martha and a Magdalene in his selection of choice followers.

Ordinarily our sympathies are with womankind. The mother of the race is entitled to every careful consideration at our hands. Their feet rock the cradle and they are always at the grave, if opportunity permits. We can only express the hope, that in this case, the women may escape any drastic punishment of the law, but let them be taught a moral lesson that is not to be found in the teachings of any bible or in any known religious system. They will then abstain from a repetition of such follies as those which have brought them into such unpleasant notoriety.

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ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

Let us whisper the name with reverence and love.

In recognition of the moral worth and intellectual greatness of the late Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, the Blade gladly devotes this issue to his memory, in the hope and expectation that it may act as a stimulant to all who loved him and honor his name, in worthy and fitting efforts to emulate his life and work by doing what they can to strike the remaining fetters upon Liberty.

America has had but one Ingersoll. Will the republic ever boast another? In vain did the church strive to quench his immortal thought. With the sweep of his mighty intellect he brushed away the fogs of bigotry and intolerance and planted liberal ideas in the hearts of orthodox advocates. His plea was for universal mental liberty. He made no discrimination of age, color or sex. His radiant talent and immortal genius was given to Freedom's cause without one solitary selfish thought.

Ingersoll was essentially the one man of his day and age. He was needed. His utterances were like the surges of the great sea and swept over the nation in mighty volume. He taught that moral virtue was not a marketable commodity and that the church had no monopoly on

goodness. He perceived the errors of the church, and with shafts of unerring logic he ruthlessly and fearlessly exposed them to public view. He explained the difference between theology and philosophy, revealing the absurdities of the one and demonstrating the great beauties of the other. He took god out of the universe and delivered the universe to man. When we think of the moral courage such a work demanded, at the time it was undertaken, the many sacrifices made in the interest of a common humanity, the innumerable charities he indulged in without ostentation, the sublime beauty he inculcated and expounded for human life, the glory he threw about the intellect of man, we can but perceive even a moiety of the greatness of Ingersoll's character and life.

From different sources the suggestion has been made that an annual custom be inaugurated among Freethinkers for an Ingersoll memorial to take place on or about the anniversary of his birth. Some have suggested that Paine and Ingersoll be memorialized together. No matter which view may find popular favor, the Blade agrees with the principal proposition to memorialize the name of Ingersoll with appropriate ceremonies as each birthday recurs. Just as Thomas Paine laid the foundations for political and religious liberty in his day, so did Ingersoll take up the work of putting those principles into practice and how well he succeeded, posterity will testify. The suggestion should be acted upon and practical steps taken to make the memorial a fact.

Ingersoll taught that doubt was the mother of all knowledge. Only through doubt can examination and inquiry be made. Doubt leads to progress and change, and realising this, Ingersoll sought to encourage the doubter into active thought. He taught that truth is ever young; that it never grows so old that it must be accepted on faith alone. He explored the great ocean and revealed the continents of truth he had been fortunate enough to discover. Above it all he was essentially a man. Pity would stream from his breast at the sight of suffering, and a noble action made him exultant with pride. In the home, in the public places, he was ever and always the same, the one, true, great and mighty Ingersoll.

Human vocabulary is inadequate for the Blade to express its love and admiration for this greatest of all Americans of the Nineteenth Century. Were we able so to do we would pluck from language every flower of thought and expression, weave them into an everlasting garland with which to bedeck his precious name and memory. He loved and appreciated all that was good in men and women and those within whom these virtues shine the most love and appreciate him.

Ingersoll made his appeals to the reason of the people, ignoring the coarse insults of the church. He refused to sling slime with the lepidosauria. He bore himself in men-

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tal battle with all the grace and courtesy of an Arthurian knight. The battle which he so successfully waged against priestcraft and superstition, twin evils that have afflicted humanity so fearfully and long, will pass into future history as the mightiest struggle waged by one man for human liberty and human rights since Rienzi contended single-handed against the gilded robbers of Rome.

All honor and glory to him who planted the standard of Freethought upon the mountain heights of morality, amid the polar snows of human virtue and love, and with clarion call inciting honest men to follow where he had dared to lead.

PAPAL DESIGNS ON AMERICA.

The voice of the tempter is again heard in the land.

With siren song he would beguile the unthinking into a subversion of the very principles upon which our government is built.

"Let the expense of maintaining the schools be borne by the State. * * * Atheists and non-Christians should be excluded from any office of authority."

This is the attitude of Cardinal Gibbons towards the public school system of the nation and his feeling toward those who are not of his particular form of faith. And who is Cardinal Gibbons? Simply the recognized head of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in America, an institution that is alone responsible for the cruelties and agonies of the Dark Ages, an era which he would reintroduce were he permitted to have his own way.

Various comments have been made upon the recently published utterances of Mr. Gibbons concerning the religious, scholastic and political creed of the confederated States. Few of them seem to grasp the full meaning or true intent of this representative of the Papacy in America. He lays great stress on his view that the government should support the school system to be established under the name and authority of the denomination to which he belongs. He also insists that none but denominational schools should receive governmental support, thus excluding all who are not affiliated with some religious or orthodox institution.

From the records given by the last census it will be found that less than one-half, or scarcely more than one-third, of the people of the United States, express or proclaim any allegiance to any form of religion. Therefore this accredited agent of the pope would suppress and oppress the millions who find a home on the sun-kissed fields of this glorious land because they do not and cannot agree with him, and see divine revelation through the same orthodox glasses as himself. In other words, he wants all to belong to him. Aye, even the Dark Ages again.

But why does he suggest that the State should bear the expense of maintaining the schools? Who,

in the name of "The Devil and Tom Walker," maintains the schools now? Does not the State? Ah, We catch it. The State does actually support the schools, but it is not the State of Catholicism. Thanks to the Revolutionary Fathers, there are millions in America who are yet able to acquire an education, to imbibe knowledge, at the fountain known as Freedom—a freedom unbiased, untrammelled and undefiled by church or priest. A Catholic school system supported by the public treasury would prove a bonanza for Rome, but Uncle Sam is not such a fool as Rome thinks, though such a thought emanates from an American cardinal in the name of Rome.

But there is a hidden meaning in this abortion he would foist upon the American people. Where is it? What is it? Listen! It is a secret plan to usurp the functions and powers of government and to overturn the fundamental principles of religious liberty upon which it is built. He would accomplish this by compelling a government support of his parochial schools, and, by excluding from public office all who did not believe in his system of religious faith and worship. He demands that our sovereign citizenship shall recognize the right of his church to such government support. He demands, *soto voce*, that he be accorded kingly powers over our public school system. Pity the children! Constitutional inhibitions does not appear to cause him the slightest alarm. But, say, who built this play house? Who first put his foot upon this pile of mud and made his frogstool? The requiem sung by the winds of American liberty alone shall make answer. From a strictly legal standpoint, the cause he now advocates can be described in but one way, namely, Treason.

The Catholic church recognizes no sovereignty but its own. It claims, practically, a nation within a nation. Under our laws no man can be permitted to openly defy the mandates of a National Assembly. To rebel against governmental authority is termed treasonable. Then this open defiance of our constitutional inhibitions concerning the establishment of religion, this attempt to stir up strife and animosity between the American nation and the papacy, is treason in its most aggravated form. The advocacy and agitation to overthrow a provision of the Constitution of the Republic can only be described as treason. The Constitution is not only expressive of the will of the people, but it stands as a perpetual obstruction against repressive religious legislation. The Constitution is the yesterday, the today, and the to-morrow of our national liberty. In that instrument we find the following:

"Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion," and "no State shall pass any law contravening the Constitution of the United States."

Those eminent authors of that instrument, the authors of our freedom, holding common council in the face of the eruptions and corruptions of the "mother church" and hav-

ing before them the murderous past of the Catholic hierarchy at Rome, they decided then and there that the people of this grand old Union, this confederation of sovereign States, all who sought the shelter of her hospitable shores, should be henceforth and forever free from the assaults of the bloody "Tickle Toby" of the saintly devils of Rome.

Let us emphasize. The Constitution says "shall not." That is mandatory. No discretion is allowed. Then what greater treason than to allow the Catholic church to deliberately advocate strife among our people, and to usurp the Constitution and violate our law, to overthrow a principle of liberty which our people hold to be inviolate? We doubt not that the framers of that instrument, which the giddy Gibbons seeks to dress up in a flowing Mother Hubbard, the more convenient for squeezing, had in mind the very policy which he now advocates. By declaring that it "shall not" be, they intended that any attempt to overthrow the prerogatives of a free people, by dignitaries of any church, should be deemed treasonable and wholly repugnant to the spirit of American freedom.

Woe unto this Republic if ever our Supreme Court comes under Roman Catholic domination. The priests of destruction evidently aim at such a consummation. Catholic interpretations would then be given to it and instead of being a bulwark of liberty, it would be stretched, with rubber-like propensities, to serve the Catholic faith. The Constitution would be made to "cover the tooth" and fit the "babe" Cardinal Gibbons is seeking to hatch. Doubtless, he hopes it will be fed from the bottle of apathy and indifference among free people.

RELIGION AND CHRISTIANITY.

Devotees of the Christian form of worship are not necessarily religious, nor are truly religious people necessarily Christian believers. Religion and Christianity are not synonymous. There are religious people who do not believe in Christianity, and there are many Christians who are far from being religious.

It is necessary to a proper understanding of the differences here suggested that we know what is meant by the terms used. This is not a light or easy undertaking. Taking dictionary definitions we are forced to the conclusion that Christians have even monopolized these to such an extent that some definitions given to controversial terms are not acceptable to an enlightened intelligence.

Religion may be defined as a sort of tie, or ligament, that binds society. Christianity is merely a belief in the existence of a god denominated the Jehovah of the Jews, as distinguished from the gods of other cults, and carries with it a belief in all the forms of mysticism, worship, and idolatry that now characterize the Christian church. True religion

does not consist in the preaching of dry-rot sermons by men specially prepared therefor, or in dressing up in tawdry finery and millinery displays for the purpose of going to hear them. Neither can religion be regarded as morality, or even a moral sentiment, as it is commonly understood, for some of the most religious are the most immoral, and vice-versa.

Religion may mean reverence, but it does not, of a necessity, imply any sort of reverence for any sort of god. It does mean, however, a reverence for men, a reverence for women, and a reverence for children, to the end that the substantial rights of each may be protected, safeguarded and advanced to the full limit of opportunity. In a philosophical sense, Atheism, which is without a belief in any god, is as much a religion as Theism which is ready to show a meek servility before any god. All the various systems of worship which pass muster under the name of religion are but elaborate institutions established for the purpose of allegorizing myth created by ignorance. These are not religions in the true sense, but by common consent, have been accepted as such, perhaps for the lack of a more definite description.

The man who can sympathize with suffering, is a religious man, no matter what his belief regarding gods and ghosts may be. The man who can truly worship all that is beautiful in childhood, in true womanhood and true manhood, is religious, although he may refuse to recognize all the creeds ever invented as binding upon him. The man who strives to attain a universal happiness, a happiness to be shared by all, not for himself alone, is a religious man, though he may live and die without thought of heaven or hell, places of joy and pain, in the hereafter, as inculcated by the so-called religious systems of the world.

On the other hand, a man may be a true Christian, that is, he may strictly conform to all the requirements of the church, he may submit to baptism by sprinkling or immersion, he may eat cracker and call it the body of Christ, he may contribute liberally to the church funds, sing with a loud voice to be heard by those about him, wear a long face as indicative of exceeding great piety, read his Bible three times a day, or more, if he may, believe in miracles and that miracles were necessary to establish a divine theocracy on earth, swallow the gods and saviors put before him, and yet, in spite of it all, he has no more religion in him than a shoat or a goat.

These divergences and differences are the outcome of a fuller understanding of the externals of our human life, an understanding that has been forced upon us by an ever advancing scientific inquiry and achievement. True religion cannot be defined as a mere faith in god. The world is rapidly arriving at that stage of thought where this distinction is being recognized. When we assert that Science will ultimately destroy religion, we mean those artificial

systems created by man for his own humility and subjection. The objective being to lift humanity from off the existing foundation made of reeds and bending saplings, and place society upon a solid and more substantial basis. We would substitute reason for faith, man for god, and make our heaven here instead of in some fanciful hereafter.

Just so long as a hireling priesthood can say to the multitude, "Do this and you go to heaven, but if you do this hell will be your portion," there will never be a lack of infernal, dogmatic command. Once the whole system is understood as being a mere figment of mediaeval theology, and its terrors classed with other fairy tales, where it belongs, then even the church must become uncertain of itself and its supposed authority. The church has long since recognized the fact that it is incapable of frightening men and women into being good. Yet there are good Christians. These are not good because they are Christians, but good from their very nature and would still have been good if the name of Jesus had never been known.

A WORD WITH OUR FRIENDS.

Even under the most favorable circumstances the publication of a Freethought paper is not to be considered as a get-rich-quick concern, and many a brave heart has been compelled to abandon its course. What with business depression, a depression created by corrupt politicians for the mere purpose of playing politics, and its consequent financial stringency, the Blade has suffered as much as any other periodical in the entire country.

During the past few months we have been fortunately favored with a steady increase in the number of new subscribers. Outside of the help given by a very few friends, these have been secured through our own efforts. Wherever we could secure the name and address of a liberal man or woman, sample copies of the Blade have been sent out unstintingly, and in many instances, good has resulted therefrom. But this is not enough. The Blade ought to be placed in a position whereby it is no longer handicapped by being kept upon the point of a fine balance between debt and despair. The trouble, however, lies with a large delinquent list, which if promptly paid, would put us safely upon the side of prosperity.

We know that Freethinkers, as a class, are willing to extend a generous support to their publications, and we also know that the delinquency is not intentional. It is rather an oversight, a case of neglect. To combat this we feel that by directing the attention of all delinquents to the date shown on their tab, showing when subscriptions expire, they will take the only proper course—pay up as soon as possible. It is to these we now make an appeal.

Again, friends, the winter season will soon be upon us. In a few weeks the harvest will be over, the long nights set

in and you and your friends will appreciate good reading matter that the time spent indoors may not be wasted. With such a season approaching why not open up a campaign in behalf of the Blade? Why not take upon yourself the duty of securing one or two new subscribers. Our premium and special rate offer stands open until October 1. Aside from the pecuniary profit it will bestow upon the Blade's depleted exchequer, and viewing the matter from the standpoint of propaganda alone, what is your impression of the value of a Freethought man or woman to the cause who could not bring one fellow-worker into our ranks in the course of one month? The real, active Freethinker could do even better than that. Then why not try?

Friends, we ask that you get busy! For the next month, just make an effort and show what you can do. If you have the welfare of our cause at heart, and is it not humanity's cause, it would not be necessary to urge that you strive to push our propagaranda work.

REMEMBER—Just ONE NEW SUBSCRIBER from each present subscriber in the next thirty days would mean a circulation for the Blade of just DOUBLE what it is now.

The Blade is pleased to announce that it will shortly begin the publication of a series of articles from the capable pen of Judge Parish B. Ladd, of Alameda, California, whose labors in behalf of Freethought are too well known to need comment. These articles are being designed by him to run serially, and will show both Freethought and Christianity at the counting house striking a balance sheet. For the mere reason here given, the Blade ought to be given a circulation double its present size that this work of Judge Ladd may be read more universally.

By special request from Mrs. Henry, the Blade announces that owing to poor health and the constant care of an aged aunt, she will be unable to respond, at present, to any calls for officiating at Freethought funerals. Deeming that such an announcement is due to her comrades, the Blade gives it with deep regret, so that no disappointment may follow her inability to make response to any call. It may be that in a short time Mrs. Henry will be able to render such services when due notice will be given.

The Christian religion has been adjudged a moral bankrupt in the high court of public opinion, and we are simply awaiting a distribution of its assets among its innumerable creditors.

It ought to be unnecessary to further urge the Correspondence School to the Freethinkers of America. But a few days remain before it actually begins its labors, and we want all to get right in and give it a boost on its journey.

Two Freethought Conventions

Canal Dover, Ohio, September 5---9

MATERIALIST ASSOCIATION Program

SATURDAY NIGHT, SEPTEMBER 5.—Round Table Conference in parlors of Central Hotel to outline convention work and discuss methods of propaganda.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7.—Morning Session.

Buckeye Secular Union at Hardesty's Opera House.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7.—Morning Session.

1. Election of chairman of convention.
2. Chairman's opening address.
3. Secretary's report of membership and finance.
4. Appointment of Committees.
5. Discussion of members present, and reading of letters from absent members upon methods for the promotion and welfare of the Association and its propaganda.

AFTERNOON SESSION

1. Reports of Committees.
2. General discussion on propaganda with such recommendations as may be deemed advisable.
3. Introduction of secretaries, writers, delegates, fraternal delegates from other organizations, for five minute talks on any subject.

EVENING SESSION

1. Address.
2. Address.
3. Address.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8.—Morning Session.

1. General discussion "Do we need any constitution in addition to our invitation and application blanks"? Shall we introduce the words "I believe into all future blanks," before the words, "There is no god or future life?"

2. Election of officers for ensuing term.

3. Final reports of Committees and action on propaganda work.

AFTERNOON SESSION

1. General discussion with Christians and Spiritualists, either or both on "proofs for and against the existence of a god and future life." Five minute talks. If no Christians or Spiritualists will take part, our members will give their own arguments.

EVENING SESSION

1. Address.
2. Address.
3. Address.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9.

Woman's Meeting.—This is not only for materialist and agnostic women but for all women promoters of the various moral, educational, political and philanthropic movements. We want to bring these women together at Canal Dover and each explain their methods, objects and plans.

Night Meeting.—If sufficient capable women attend this meeting it is proposed to have them give public speeches.

During this day examples will be given of the meetings proposed that should take the place of religious services in all churches.

All members and women speakers for Wednesday's meetings should send their names to the Secretary.

MRS. ELIZA MOWRY BLIVEN,
Brooklyn, Connecticut, Box 76.

PROGRAM OF CONVENTION

Buckeye Secular Union Arranges for Splendid
Gathering at Canal Dover, O., Sept. 6.

MATERIALIST ASSOCIATION ON HAND.

The sixth annual session of the Buckeye Secular Union will be held in Hardesty's Opera House, Third Street, Canal Dover, Ohio, Sunday, September 6th, E. M. 308.

PROGRAM.

Morning Session.

- 9:00.—Address of Welcome.....Samuel Toomey
Response.....Otto Wettstein
10:00.—Report of the Secretary.....Miss Lou Lawrence
Report of the Treasurer.....Mr. J. Wilbur White
10:30.—Election of Officers for Ensuing Year.
11:00.—Short Speech, or Round Table Discussion, by Members.
12:00.—Adjourn for Luncheon.

Afternoon Session.

- 1:30.—Why I am a Freethinker.....Mr. A. C. Narragon
2:00.—Lesson from "Paine".....Mr. William McCarthy
2:15.—What Is Superstition.....W. S. English, Esq.
2:45.—What Is Education.....Mr. Jesse P. White
3:15.—The Basis of Our Hopes Is the Law of Progress
Dr. T. J. Bowles

- 4:30.—Trolley ride to Tuscora Park.

Evening Session.

- 7:30.—Idealism.....Mr. Walter C. Hardesty
7:50.—What Women Ought to do Instead of Church Work
Mrs. Eliza Mowry Bliven
8:30.—Secular Philosophy vs. Christian Faith.
Mr. John R. Charlesworth, Editor Blue Grass Blade
The following committees are herewith appointed:
Organization—Eliza M. Bliven, Gus A. Parr, Benjamin Baldwin, Esq.
Resolutions—Dr. J. T. Bowles, Helen M. Lucas, A. C. Narragon.
Press—John R. Charlesworth, Lou Lawrence, Ed. M. Lowe.
Finance—Samuel Toomey, Anna H. McGuire, Joseph E. Johnston.
Entertainment—Walter C. Hardesty, Nelle M. Converse, Alfred M. Stowe.

NOTICE.

The Central Hotel will be headquarters, and a special rate of \$1.50 per day will be given to those attending the convention.

The Materialist Association will meet in Canal Dover on the 7th and 8th of September, and will be present at the meeting of the Buckeye Secular Union. The two events cover three days. The M. A. will also meet in the Hardesty Opera House. The program for this convention will be announced in a few days.

Everybody invited and free discussion, free press and free speech is our motto.

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The Blade's Correspondence

THE INGERSOLL MEMORIAL PICNIC.

The Ingersoll Annual Memorial Picnic will be held at E. B. Moffitt's Grove, three miles west of Newton, Iowa, Sunday, August 16. The forenoon will be given to ten-minute speeches and recitations. After dinner the address will be delivered by the Hon. J. R. Garrall, of Newton. All are welcome. Bring your dinner baskets well filled and have a good time.

Commends Dr. Bowles Articles.

DUNCAN, OKLA.—I consider Dr. Bowles's Persistence of Superstition, "the best thing of the kind I have ever read. It is just the thing for general distribution for propaganda.

Atheists and materialists labor under a grievous misapprehension in regard to the laws of nature. They assert that Nature's laws are "unbendable" and "unbreakable." When man is concerned that is not true. To man, nature's laws are both bendable and breakable, and all his woes arise from the ruthless abrogation of Nature's laws.

In his unfathomable ignorance he substitutes laws of his own. Political laws, for the laws of Nature. He breaks and bends both the law of expansion and the law of development, and suffers accordingly.

DENNIS LEAHY.

School Information Wanted.

SPARTA, MINN.—Please send me further information concerning your Correspondence School. I do not understand enough about it from the advertisement.

MISS LEMPI HYOVALTI.

Sends Renewal For Two.

NORTH MONTEPELIER, VT.—Find herewith money order of \$3.00, \$1.50 of which apply to my paper and \$1.50 to G. S. Gray's paper both at this office.

I am Post Master and have been for thirty-six years and am and have been for years a subscriber to the "Blade." It don't seem possible that they can exclude it from the mails. In case they try it call on me for help and you shall have it. Yours for Freethought.—W. G. NYE.

Wants Blade in India.

NARASINGANPETAI, S. IND.—I should be very much obliged to you if you will kindly supply me with a specimen copy of your journal, "The Blue Grass Blade," and other journals, if you have any. Thanking you in anticipation, I am, Yours cordially—T. G. SRINIVASA AIYANGAR.

HAGERSTOWN, MD.—Delegates to those Confederated Rationalistic Convention, to be held September 5, 6 and 7, at Canal Dover, Ohio, should be numerous, as it may be the last chance many may have of meeting some of our famous old leaders, who are nearing life's journey's end. And all should come prepared with pointed, lucid, logical, forcible five minute speeches with which to entertain the convention if opportunity offers and also with clear, concise, boiled-down, resolutions regarding Freethought, freespeech, free press and free (uncensored) mails that can be passed and will be widely published in the newspapers as coming from such a large body of delegates and thus help awaken thought along these lines among those who otherwise never see or hear any Rationalistic arguments whatever.

The Convention should elect a Convention reporter who should give an authorized report of the proceedings, in such brief, condensed, forcible way as will most likely be published widely and give the most favorable impression possible of the Convention's work.

All nearby editors should be cordially

invited to have their reporters present and publish as much as they possibly can of the proceedings.

The meeting should be well advertised locally and made a success and benefit to the cause as well as to all who attend it. "Nothing succeeds like success."

Success attracts the populace and leaders. It will advertise our ideas, our work and our literature.

Its speeches and resolutions should be purely Rationalistic, entirely avoiding all outside ism's, as this will be sufficiently broad enough a field to cover in three days and besides all outside isms anyway.

Heartily wishing the Convention and the cause success, I am—D. WEBSTER GROH.

Duty Calls Him Away.

FORT MOULTRIE, S. C.—I was glad to hear from you and learn that you are making preparations to open the Correspondence School, but I am sorry that I have to withdraw at present. I am connected with the electrical department in the United States Army, and I have been notified since July 1st, that I would be sent to Manila, Philippine Islands, the last of December or the first of next January. So it would put me in a very bad position to take the course, for I will have a great deal of work to do and a lot of hard studying, as is always the case in a new post.

I expect to get the books in October, before I go to Manila, if you will sell them to me and when I get a little spare time I can study them. If I live to get back I will then take up the full course as a student in the School. I will have only twenty months to serve and will complete my enlistment then I expect to quit the army. I will send you my subscription money and a order for a few books between the tenth and fifteenth of next month. I hope you will be successful in your School.

G. M. COLLIER.

In Plenty of Time, Anyway.

ST. LOUIS, MO.—Of course, if trouble comes to the Blade from United States you can count on me for a few dollars—just neglected to write to tell you so, an very busy. Had an accumulation of about fifteen Blades but have only two to finish reading.

L. WILEY.

Some Corrections Made.

EUREKA, TEXAS.—Have just received the Blade. Was surprised to see the article entitled "Struck Fruitful Soil." I did not suppose that my letter would be published. However, all would be right but for two blunders, typographical, or inability of typesetter to make out the words correctly, or neglect of proof-reader to detect the errors. In the third paragraph, the word "ferrity" (there is no such word) and Horrows should be "trinity of barriers" (obstruction) and in the same paragraph the word "whiskevism" should be "whigism." Please correct.—E. A. BYRNE.

For Man, Not God.

OHIO—I have received a sample copy for which thanks, but am eighty-five years old at my nearest birthday, and ill, and unable to help you. But all that tend to nurse humanity to a great self consciousness I am glad to cheer.

I have been a minister, then a lawyer,

but always studying and have always been a Freethinker rightly translated the 1st verse of Genesis reads: "In the beginning the powers created the Heaven and the earth." That I believe, but can have no conception of these powers. The liar or liars who rendered the word "God," were to blame. Preachers don't need to think. "Behold we know not anything" beyond sensation and thought upon its teachings. Thus we are limited. To us "Love is heaven and heaven is love. Men are brethren, bound to help each other by instinct and reason. Paine and Ingersoll were good examples of true lives." We are climbing the steps of time and life is now worth more than ever before. So be it.

Yours for man, the gods surely need no help.—J. B. DUNN.

About the School.

ISHPEMING, Mich.—Will you kindly send me particulars regarding your mail course in science and philosophy, etc. I am also enclosing ten cents in stamps for sample copy of the "Blue Grass Blade."

W. J. ROBERTS.

DAVE'S LETTER.

TO HIS DEAR HEAVENLY PARENT...

(Copyright applied for 1908 by Franklin H. Heald.)

My dear heavenly father:—
Is the Gost and you and Jesus, relay one in three or is it one of Bob Burdets jones? Which one of you are they in? Who are which? Is there one in three at the sametime or is there three in one? Which of you can go the fastest the gost or Jesus or you? Can you go from here to heven as quick as a car goes from any part of Los Angeles to the plaza? How far is it? I mean about how far: If it is as far off as Arcturass you needent put down all the cifers but just tell me how many and which direction it is from hear? I mean what time of day wood I hav to die, so when I went strate un I wood go to heven?

Can the Devil go to Hell as fast as you can? Was Jesus realy three days in Hell? Where in Hell was Jesus, when he was in Hell three days? I mean, did the Devile have him in any of them hot places that Papa has pictures of? Did he try all of them to see which hurt the worst? Did you make Hell yourself or did the Devil make it for you? Is the Devil one of you? Are some of you in the Devil some of the time, or is the Devil in some of you all the time?

Do you say "me and the gost," or do you say "the gost and me," when you are talking about yourself? My papa dont take any stock in gosts, but he is not pless and he is not ass old as Joe is. Joe has seen gosts hisself and lots of people he nos has seen them. He dont no whether he ever saw you or not, but he says you mite hav bin in the big lye he "seed when he was inunclated." He means converted. The lye was so fierce that he didn't dare to look at it only sideways, so he cudent see what was in it. If he gets to thinking about it much, he may see something in it yet, and if he does he will mention it at prair-meeting. Can a person tell anything they pleas at prayer-meeting, if they "lye for your glory?"

Hav you any Dogs in Heven? If you hav, you need not expect my Papa there. He is not much of a Dog-lover and he don't

care who nose it. He thinks a Dog is naturally nastier in its habits, than a Christian, but he don't blame the Dogs for being nasty and obseen, becaus he don't no any better and he does blame the christian because she ought to no better and dont. He hopes the Dogs and christians and Idiots and murders and asses and darkeys hav soles and will all go to heven, if washing in the blood of Jesus will make them clean. He wont go to a meeting or club where the chairman takes his Dog. He used to go where the Dog set by the chairman and the only way you cud tell them apart was that the Dog new the most. Joe likes Dogs and says it jest imagination to bleve they stink. He says "dey don' smell any wo's dan I does" and Papa says that is the reason Joe cant smell them. Papa can tell a christian or a dog kisser by their smell. He dont like christians or Dogs or horses or darkeys or such things much; they make him sick.

Does your Jesus really smell that way and is that the reason thir wer so many such things, and sheepherders around the stable when he was borned?

Which do you think can pray the best Bryan or Roosevelt or taft? Will the pepte that votes get mad about the steem rooier-machene or will tha think it is all wright as Jos dose? He thinks it is your hand doing it. Mabce I will vote some time. Was your Jesus an anerchist or why did they hang him between thieves? Was he a thief?

Why dont you want honest people in heven "that needeth no repentence?"

As ever,

DAVE.

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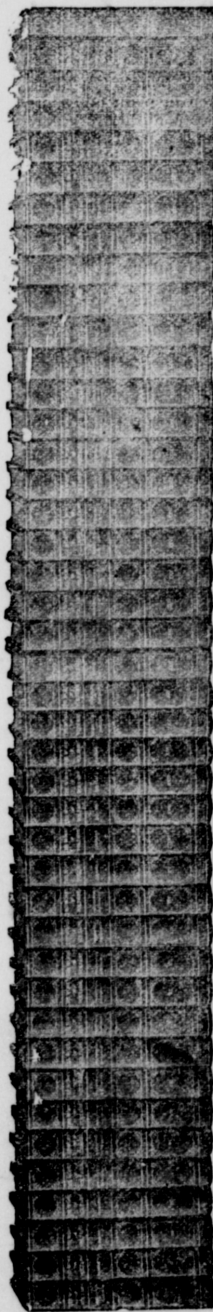
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Voltaire will always be regarded as the greatest man in literature, of modern times, and perhaps even of all times.

—GOETHE

Atheism and fanaticism are the two poles of a universe of confusion and horror. The narrow zone of virtue is between those two. March with a firm step in that path; believe in God and do good.

—VOLTAIRE

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